

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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----- 009823

R 030006Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5625

INFO AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

AMCONSUL SYDNEY

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, VN, VS

SUBJECT: MATERIALS ON COMMUNIST TREATMENT OF PRISONERS
IN VIET-NAM

REF: A) STATE 101993; B) CANBERRA 2624

1. APPRECIATE PROMPT RESPONSE IN REF A TO OUR REQUEST
FOR MATERIAL ON COMMUNIST TREATMENT OF PRISONERS IN VIET-
NAM, FOR TRANSMITTAL TO AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL GROUP IN
AUSTRALIA. WE WILL MAKE GOOD USE OF MATERIAL BEING TRANS-
MITTED TO US.

2. HOWEVER, EMBASSY BELIEVES THERE WILL BE CONTINUING
NEED FOR MATERIAL ON COMMUNIST TREATMENT OF PRISONERS IN
VIET-NAM. AS WE POINTED OUT IN REF B, PERHAPS ONLY WAY
U.S. CAN DO ANYTHING FOR POTENTIAL VICTIMS OF DRV IN VIET-
NAM IS TO DIRECT MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF INTERNATIONAL PUBLICI-
TY ON MISTREATMENT OF PRISONERS. WE APPRECIATE THAT OUR
ABILITY TO COLLECT MATERIAL HAS DECLINED SHARPLY WITH
EVACUATION OF EMBASSY FROM SAIGON. HOWEVER, REFUGEES
WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE THEIR WAY OUT, IF PAST EXPERIENCE
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PDH COMMUNIST TAKEOVERS ELSEWHERE IS ANY GUIDE, AND

THROUGH A VARIETY OF SOURCES (PRESS, TV. COMMENTS OF TRAVELLERS) FRAGMENTS OF INFORMATION WILL BECOME AVAILABLE WHICH, PIECED TOGETHER, WILL PROVIDE SOME GUIDE TO WHAT IS HAPPENING.

3. WE DO NOT RPT NOT KNOW, OF COURSE, IF DEPT ENVISAGES LONG PERIOD OF HOSTILITY TOWARDS NEW AUTHORITIES IN SVN OR HOPES TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS WITH PRG OR DRV IN NEAR FUTURE. OBVIOUSLY, THESE ALTERNATIVE POLICIES WOULD IMPLY CONSIDERABLY DIFFERENT PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAMS AS A CONSEQUENCE.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: UNLESS DEPT CONSIDERS IT UNSUITABLE FOR POLICY REASONS, SUGGEST CENTRAL POINT BE DESIGNATED TO COLLECT INFO ON POLITICAL PRISONERS HELD AND/OR MISTREATED BY VIETNAMESE COMMUNISTS AND DISSEMINATE SUCH INFO WIDELY. SUCH POINT MIGHT USEFULLY BE IN INR, FOR EXAMPLE. CONCEIVABLE THAT COMMUNIST BEHAVIOR WILL NOT BE AS BAD AS OFTEN ANTICIPATED. IN SUCH CASE, FACTS SHOULD ALSO BE MADE AVAILABLE PUBLICLY AS MEANS OF BUILDING CREDIBILITY OF OUR REPORTS ON THIS SUBJECT AND HOLDING COMMUNISTS TO BEST POSSIBLE STANDARD OF TREATMENT UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES.
GREEN

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